

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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FOR: IOP/M, IEA

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SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION REPORT

REF : USIA 10059 CIRCULAR

1. PER REFTEL FOLLOWING FULL TEXT EDITORIAL MAY 1
ENGLISH LANGUAGE CHINA NEWS ENTITLED "PRESERVING THE
FREE WORLD." ABRIDGEMENT PERMISSIBLE, NO COPYRIGHT
NOTICE REQUIRED, NORMAL CREDIT LINE EXPECTED:
2. (BEGIN TEXT) AMERICAN WITHDRAWAL FROM VIETNAM DOES
NOT MARK THE END OF AN ERA AND DOES NOT IMPLY THAT
THE UNITED STATES IS A PAPER TIGER SCURRYING FOR ITS
ISOLATED DEN WITH ITS TAIL BETWEEN ITS LEGS.
3. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT THERE WILL BE NO CHANGE IN
THE WAKE OF THE AMERICAN RETIREMENT FROM INDOCHINA. THE
REPERCUSSIONS WILL NOT BE LIMITED TO SOUTHEAST ASIA.
4. THE ERA IS STILL THAT OF NUCLEAR STAND-OFF BETWEEN
THE SUPERPOWERS. WE HAVE LIVED
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WITH THIS SUPERFACT

FOR SO LONG THAT WE SOMETIMES PLACE PERIPHERAL SCENES --
AS VIETNAM OR THE MIDDLE EAST -- IN THE CENTER OF THE
STAGE.

5. THE UNITED STATES IS STILL THE STRONGEST NATION IN THE WORLD, AND THAT WITHOUT REGARD TO ANY TEMPORARY TACTICAL ADVANTAGE OF THE U.S.S.R. AMERICA HAS THE STAYING POWER, THE RESOURCES, THE KNOW-HOW -- AND LET THERE BE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT -- THE COURAGE AND WILL TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM.

6. FOR THE MOMENT, AMERICANS ARE CONFUSED. THEY TRIED SO HARD, THEY SPENT US\$150 BILLION AND CONTRIBUTED 55,000 LIVES ONLY TO LOSE A WAR AND GAIN THE HATRED OF MANY THEY WERE TRYING TO SAVE.

7. SOME AMERICANS WOULD LIKE TO TAKE REFUGE IN ISOLATIONISM. THEY WOULD LIKE TO RETIRE BEHIND THEIR OCEANS AND RELY ON THE DETERRENT POWER OF NUCLEAR MISSILES.

8. RICHARD ROVERE HAS REMARKED THAT "ANTI-WAR SENTIMENT -- THAT IS, THE VIEW THAT NO WARS ARE DEFENSIBLE -- IS PERHAPS HIGHER THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN IN ANY WESTERN NATION, AND IS NOT SO MUCH SHORT OF UNIVERSAL AMONG THE YOUNG."

9. AMERICA HAS BEEN PEACE-MINDED BEFORE -- AND ISOLATIONIST, TOO. IN THE 1920S AND 30S, THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES WERE ALLOWED TO SHRINK TO THE SIZE OF A CORPORAL'S GUARD.

10. WITH WAR INEVITABLE, THE UNITED STATES WAS STILL WOEFULLY UNPREPARED WHEN JAPANESE BOMBS FELL ON PEARL HARBOR.

11. GERMANY HAD ALREADY GOBBLED UP ALL OF EUROPE EXCEPT THE BRITISH ISLES. JAPAN HAD SPREAD ITS TENTACLES ACROSS ALL EAST ASIA EXCEPT FOR THE HINTERLAND OF CHINA.

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12. LACK OF WEAPONS AND TRAINING AND THE ENEMY'S HUGE ASSETS MADE NO DIFFERENCE. IN LESS THAN FOUR YEARS, THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES HAD DEFEATED THE WORLD'S TWO STRONGEST MILITARY POWERS.

13. THE UNITED STATES OF TODAY IS NOT SO DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF 1917 OR 1941. IT IS BENT ON PEACE. IT WOULD PREFER TO BE LEFT ALONE. BUT IF THE PINCH COMES, IF THE UNITED STATES AND THE FREE WORLD ARE THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION, AMERICANS WILL FIGHT AGAIN -- AND WIN.

14. FOR NUMEROUS AND COMPLICATED REASONS THAT WILL BE DEBATED FOR YEARS TO COME, VIETNAM WAS NOT THE PLACE FOR

THE SHOWDOWN WITH THE TOTALITARIANS WHO SEEK TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD.

15. THE UNITED STATES COULD HAVE WON THE WAR. IT COULD HAVE FLATTENED NORTH VIETNAM. LYNDON JOHNSON CHOSE NOT TO DO SO WHEN HE FOUND THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DID NOT SUPPORT THE STEPS NECESSARY FOR TOTAL VICTORY.

16. EVEN AFTER THAT, SOUTH VIETNAM COULD HAVE BEEN PRESERVED -- AS SOUTH KOREA HAS BEEN -- BY A FIRM AMERICAN COMMITMENT AND A CONTINUING AMERICAN PRESENCE.

17. THE UNITED STATES DID NOT TRUST THE COMMUNISTS AT PANMUNJOM AND EMERGED FROM THE KOREAN WAR WITH A STALEMATE. AT PARIS, THE AMERICANS -- OR HENRY KISSINGER AND RICHARD NIXON, AT LEAST -- CHOSE TO PUT THEIR TRUST IN COMMUNIST PROMISES.

18. BY THE TIME THE WORTHLESSNESS OF THE PARIS PEACE AGREEMENT WAS RECOGNIZED, THE U.S. POLITICAL SITUATION HAD CHANGED. NIXON WAS GONE. IN THE AFTERMATH OF WATERGATE AND VIETNAM, GERALD FORD'S HANDS WERE TIED BY A CONGRESS BENT UPON REASSERTING ITS PREROGATIVES IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THERE WERE NO REPRISALS AGAINST HANOI AND THE COMMUNISTS WERE FREE TO RESUME AND WIN THE WAR.

19. WHAT HAPPENS NOW IN THE FREE WORLD DEPENDS ON BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES.
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20. MANY AMERICANS ARE ASHAMED OF THE VIETNAM DEBACLE. THEY ARE ALSO CONSCIENCE-STRICKEN. THE DEFEAT COULD LEAD TO REINFORCEMENT OF THE ISOLATIONIST TENDENCY OR TOWARD A REASSERTION OF AMERICAN LEADERSHIP AND A RE-AFFIRMING OF AMERICAN COMMITMENTS.

21. PERHAPS THE GREATEST DANGER IS THAT AMERICAN FRIENDS AND ALLIES IN ASIA AND EUROPE WILL EXPRESS THEIR DISILLUSIONMENT IN ATTEMPTS TO "GO IT ALONE" OR IN BIDS FOR COEXISTENCE. THIS WOULD PLAY DIRECTLY INTO THE HANDS OF THE U.S. NEO-ISOLATIONISTS.

22. AMERICANS WOULD NOT BE DOOMED BUT OTHERS COULD BE. THE POINT AT WHICH THE UNITED STATES WILL RECOGNIZE THE THREAT TO ITS OWN SURVIVAL IS NOT EASY TO PREDICT.

23. THE POST-VIETNAM WAR NEED IS NOT FOR REASSESSMENT OF THE FREE WORLD'S DEFENSE STRUCTURE BUT FOR ITS STRENGTHENING. THE STRUCTURE IS STILL BASED ON THE POWER OF THE UNITED STATES, THE BELIEF THAT FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY ARE PREFERABLE TO SLAVERY AND DICTATORSHIP, AND THE WILLINGNESS OF THOSE ALLIED WITH THE UNITED

STATES TO MAKE A FULL CONTRIBUTION TO THEIR OWN SURVIVAL.

(END TEXT)

CLARKE

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